National consensus on Reservations

2038. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any concrete steps have been taken to evolve national consensus on the question of reservtions in jobs and other relevant issues for the backward classes; and

(b) whether it is a fact that most of the opposition parties like Janata, BJP, CPI, CPM etc., have publicly expressed that 'economic criteria' may also be considered for defining backwardness and have sent their suggestions to Government on this line?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF WELFARE (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) Detailed factual information relating to various aspects of reservations for Backward Classes has been called for from the State Governments and the information received so far has been compiled.

(b) The Central Government has received views from one political party only.

Financial powers for Panchayats

2039. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Panchayats in Madhya Pradesh have been given financial powers from 2nd October, 1985 ;

(b) whether the Central Government propose to issue directives to Other State Governments for giving financial powers to their panchayats ; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR) : (a) The Government of Madhya Pradesh has entrusted the panchayatiraj bodies in the State with certain functions including planning, supervision and monitoring of selected schemes and programmes with effect from 2nd October, 1985 in the sectors of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Co-operation, Forestry, Public Works, Minor Irrigation, Rural Water Supply, Rural Housing, Primary and Adult Education, Public Health and Family Welfare, Nutrition, Social Welfare, Women and Children Welfare, Welfare of Scheduled Tribes and Food and Civil Supplies as well as the programmes of IRDP, NREP and RLEGP. For certain schemes so entrusted, the funds required will also be placed at their disposal.

(b) and (c) Panchayati raj is a State subject and the States are responsible for constituting panchayatiraj bodies and giving them financial powers. The Prime Minister has written to Chief Ministers of States impressing upon them to revitalise panchayatiraj bodies by giving them financial powers and resources so as to make them vibrant grass-roots level democratic institutions.

Skimmed milk powder allotted to Madhya Pradesh

2040. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) what is the quantity of skimmed milk powder allotted to Madhya Pradesh by the Indian Dairy Corporation during the last three years;

(b) the rate at which it has been supplied; and

(c) whether any steps have been taken for its proper utilisation and if not, the reasons therefor?